



## Northeast Section UNIQUE YELLOWWARE PITCHER DISCOVERED

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A rare and probably unique example of signed and decorated yellowware was sold at a May 13th auction near East Liverpool, Ohio. Following spirited bidding at the auction held by Kenneth and Kevin Bell, the 11-inch-high pitcher sold for \$450, outdistancing any of the other china and glassware at the sale, which included three pieces of marked Lotusware.

Interest in the pitcher stemmed primarily from the crudely marked base, which reads "R. Webb[b] & Co./Potters Salineville OHIO/J.C. McDaniel." The only known reference to the R Webb or Eureka Pottery, is an 1889 directory that lists "Eureka Pottery, R. Webb & Co., Rockingham and yellowware and fancy marble china, Main St." and no other known marked pieces or pieces attributable to his short-lived pottery are known. None exist in the East Liverpool Museum of Ceramics' extensive collections, and ceramics historian William C. Gates of the Ohio Historical Society knows of no such ware or references to it.

Both sides of the pitcher are decorated with elaborate green and brown hand-painted roses, as well as a border of stylized flowers and exclamation points. If this attempt at hand-painting is typical of the Eureka Pottery's products, it is small wonder the firm did not last long, for the decorating must have consumed a great deal of time.

Unfortunately, there is no conclusive evidence of who "R. Webb" was and not even a hint of who else might have been involved in the firm, which is not included in the Ohio Secretary of State's corporation records or any other known documents. R. Webb is probably Robert Webb, who in 1880 was working with his brother Henry in one of East Liverpool's many potteries. By 1891, Robert, then about 64 years old, was back in East Liverpool, listed as a potter. J. C. McDaniel, listed as a miner, still resided in Salineville.

Salineville is a remarkable town for Ohio, geographically: surrounded by high ridges and stretching its length along either side of Yellow

Creek for over two miles, but only a few blocks wide, the town looks like a transplant from eastern Kentucky or West Virginia. Origin of the settlement dates to pioneer salt wells first developed in 1809, an industry that thrived until about the end of the Civil War. The town was laid out in 1839 and incorporated in 1848. With construction of the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad in 1852, coal mining became a major factor in the little town's economy.

The location of R. Webb & Co.'s pottery remains uncertain, as Main Street runs nearly the whole two mile length of Salineville. It is recorded that in 1889 William Hill, a Salineville merchant built a stoneware pottery that was operated for one year before being converted into an electric light plant. Hill, Lawrence & Co. Ltd., is listed as a Salineville pottery in an 1890/91 directory, but by 1893 it appears that this was known as the Cone Pottery. It may possibly be related to Webb's yellowware pottery, although a survey of the site yielded only a few fragments of stoneware waster material. The Cone Fireclay Co. was incorporated in 1893, but by



## Finely detailed decoration proved to be too costly for R. Webb & Co.

1902 had moved to East Liverpool, where it was manufacturing chimney tops.

In 1902, the Dresden China Co., organized by W.H. Deltrick of East Liverpool, began production of whiteware in the village. In 1905 the plant had been idle for a year, when C.J. Albright of Sebring, Ohio, became manager; but the plant was sold at sheriff's sale in December, 1906. Eventually the pottery was acquired by the National China Co. of East Liverpool, which operated successfully for about 15 years before closing with the onset of the Great Depression. An attempt to operate it as the Winterrich Art Pottery in the 1930s quickly failed, and no marked pieces are known from that project.

The small village of Salineville has witnessed a long history of ceramics manufacturing, but few examples and little of its history survive.

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